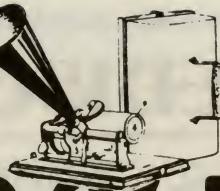


# The HILL AND DALE News



FEBRUARY 1981 No. 118



PRICE  
**20/-**  
Post Free U.K.



## THE SPEAKEASIE

### HOME-RECORDER

PRICE **20/-**  
WITH EVERLASTING  
DIAMOND NEEDLE

Post Free U.K.



#### SPECIFICATION

Speakeasie Recording attachment with Silver Quality Everlasting Diamond needle  
Speaker, Microphone, Battery Box, Recording and Replaying needles, Cleaning cloth, 10 ft. of flexible  
power or strong recording cable.  
PARTS COMPLETE

Extra Recording Gears 4/- per doz. 2/- per half dozen  
Special Speakeasie Tracking Gear from with Two Ounces 8/- per dozen

#### GUARANTEE

We guarantee that Records, clear and distinct in every syllable and of sufficient volume to fill the averaged sized room, can be made on any acoustic gramophone.

**THE SPEAKEASIE HOME - RECORDER**

# THE EDISON BELL GEM

**IS**      British Made      -      Well Made  
Reliable      -      Durable.

. . . and is the . . .

**Best & Handsomest Family Phonograph.**

**42/-**



ARISTOCRATS, GENTRY, MERCHANTS, TRADESMEN, SKILLED WORKMEN, OPERATIVES, LABOURERS and Others, are all interested  
. . . in the fact that . . .

The Edison BELL Phonograph Factory is the Only One in the King's Dominions.  
**A NEW BRITISH INDUSTRY—SUPPORT IT.**

## **DEALERS !!!**

We have something Special to say to you about these—

## **LOOK OUT FOR IT.**

**NOW!** about this RECORD QUESTION !! We are giving it a miss this month except just to say—We have some "Scorchers" coming—PARTICULARS in next 'T.M.N.' —MEANTIME we are very busy—FACTORY WORKING night and day.

**Edison BELL, 39, Charing Cross Road, LONDON.**

## **CHAIRMAN'S CHAT**

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Some members of the Society are fortunate enough to be interested only in phonographs and gramophones, or one of those two categories, or records, or certain kinds of records, and they collect nothing else. Admittedly, they must make exciting finds less and less frequently as their collections expand and their knowledge grows. General magpies like myself at least have an outlet when the poor old brain has been crammed to capacity with facts, model numbers and dates in one subject, and another blessing is the added perspective that different collecting subjects give to each other. Gramophones, for example, rose from primitive crudity to their peak and then sank beneath the tide of electrical reproduction, all within a space of forty years. The electric machine is really quite a different animal from the acoustic and I, for one, have little time for it if only because I cannot mend it when it goes wrong.

The typewriter collector, on the other hand, has a period of about 100 years of steady but undramatic development to cover, with the recent upsurge of the word processor equalling that of the radiogram in the 1930s. Lawn-mowers have an even longer history, going back to 1830, and it is only now that the basic design of that year is disappearing from the ordinary domestic lawn. To strengthen the comparison, the gramophone of 1925 was markedly different in appearance and performance from that of 1900, and yet many lawn-mowers in 1930 would have been instantly recognisable by the inventor 100 years earlier, and the sewing machine of 1950 was not much different from that of 1870, apart from its lack of surface decoration.

Occasionally, the multiple collector, to coin a phrase, finds an interesting link between two subjects. I have yet to find any manufacturer of gramophones who also had a hand in lawn-mowers, but another of my interests is old motor-cars, particularly Rovers and Daimlers, and the Roverphile is ever on the look out for a Starley Safety Bicycle or even a Coventry Machinists Company sewing machine, both of which form a part of Rover history. With Daimlers I can do even better, for the Daimler Company was from before the Great War until 1960 part of the B.S.A. group, and for a brief period around 1920 Columbia produced a rival to the Zonophone in the 'B.S.A. and Regal' gramophone, to which B.S.A. contributed the soundbox and the motor. The soundbox was not unlike the earlier Columbia Regal soundbox (of circa 1914, when 'Regal' was a model name rather than a down-market marque), but I have never seen a B.S.A. motor. Quite a few firms at this time had spare manufacturing capacity after the War, and tried to fill the gap left by the disappearance of gramophone motors from Germany. Another motor-car connection appears at the end of the twenties in the Cowie motor - Cowie made speedometers among other things, although their gramophone motors are hardly the collector's friend, since they have mazak frames which expand with age, so that the wheels cease to mesh with the pinions - a nasty complaint, very.

THE FRONTISPIECE shows an Edison Bell Gem advertisement of 1906-7; on the FRONT COVER is a SPEAKEASIE leaflet (See article on Page 165).

# FROM ORCHESTRELLE TO VOCALION

by Frank Andrews

## PART III: THE FINAL YEARS OF AEOLIAN VOCALION, 1922-4

In Britain, following the example of other record makers, Aeolian had begun to demonstrate its wares to various phonograph and gramophone societies. W. B. Parkin, recording secretary of the Brixton Gramophone Society, reported of their March meeting:

"The Aeolian people are to be congratulated upon their very excellent method of publicity, namely, getting into contact with the class of people who are most likely to appreciate their product. At our March meeting demonstrator and audience were on the best of terms. Among other things, the Vocalion is apparently specialising on chamber music and we had a fine taste of their quality in this direction in Mozart's Trio in E flat, and also two movements of Haydn's Quartet No. 3. A feature of these records is the fidelity of the string tone.

"Another commendable achievement by the Vocalion is the rescuing from its comparative obscurity of the tenor violin - the viola. The beautiful tone quality of this instrument was faithfully portrayed in the artistic playing of Mr. Lionel Tertis, who gave us the Romance from Dale's Suite. Mr. Tertis is doing more than any other individual, at the present time, to establish this somewhat neglected instrument in public favour.

"Coming to the vocal items, Malcolm McEachern is quite an acquisition. He possesses a bass voice of fine quality and, in 'Le Cor' (Flegier), was at his best. He also shone in Mendelssohn's 'I am a Roamer'. Vladimir Rosing, another Vocalion 'exclusive', electrified us with his temperamental rendering of Moussorgsky's 'Song of the Flea'. Rosing infuses a wealth of sardonic humour into this lively 'Flea' song, which must be heard to be appreciated.

"Kathleen Destournel was heard to advantage in 'Vissi d'Arte' (Puccini) and also in the plaintive ballad 'Somewhere a Voice is Calling'. The Aeolian Orchestra is a very well balanced body of musicians (apparently not very large in numbers), and their rendering of the 'Carmen' Suite and the 'Ballet Egyptien' was quite satisfactory. They were not quite so happy, however, in Mozart's 'Magic Flute' Overture, the rather military precision of their attack being ill-conceived. The band of the 1st. Life Guards brought the concert to a brilliant conclusion with a stirring performance of the '1812 Overture' which embodied both splendid playing and recording, the tone colour of the military band being vividly reflected."

In April 1922 were issued some recordings of the Moore-Duplex Coupler piano, of which there were but two in the country at the time and to which Aeolian held the sole British rights. Winifred Christie and Max Pirani had recorded this instrument which sported two keyboards tuned an octave apart and which, by means of a special trip, could produce harpsichord effects. (See the advertisement reproduced on Page

In charge of classical and standard repertoire recordings in the New York laboratories at this time was Thomas P. Ratcliff, later to come to England to lead community singing sessions at football grounds and the like. Some of these sessions were recorded by Columbia by the new electrical processes of 1925. Percy Packman is known to have been in England, whether he must have returned, had he worked in the New York laboratories. C. R. 'Johnny' Johnston was recording the religious 'Rainbow' records in America, with which Ratcliff had earlier been associated. A Clifford Hess, pianist, was in charge of the popular repertoire recordings in New York and appeared on Aeolian Vocalion records in Britain. He had replaced one George Sheffield.

In June 1922 Aeolian, who were already pressing Guardsman and Citizen records under contract for the Invicta Record Co. Ltd, bought the shares of the two directors of Invicta. They continued to issue new Guardsman records and retained Lugton and Co. as sole factors for the label, which passed to Lugton's proprietorship from Invicta some time in October.<sup>1</sup>

A British complete catalogue of Aeolian Vocalion records was issued in July 1922, including all the first list and all subsequent issues made up to December 1921. These were a mixture of British and American recordings, the American masters being sent to Hayes for pressing. These discs were given catalogue numbers in the British series. Nearly forty different American recorded artists made up the complete roster.

#### RECORD CHANGES

For the new Talking Machine Business 'Season', which traditionally began in September, Aeolian introduced the first price reductions for some of their variously labelled discs. As the Company put it, "In a great many cases, records hitherto single-sided will in future be double-sided, and all band records, formerly 5s. 10-inch and 7s. 12-inch, will be sold for 4s. and 6s. respectively."<sup>2</sup> The high standard

<sup>1</sup> In America in June, incidentally, Percy Grainger had recently inherited his mother's estate after she had fallen to her death from one of the windows in the Aeolian Building in New York.

The former recording expert there, C. R. Johnston, had now become Vice-President of the Bell Recording Corporation, New York City. He was later to return to England to rejoin the company he had left in 1909, Edison Bell.

<sup>2</sup> 24 pink-label single-sided records in the 'A' series were transferred to the red-label single-sided 'C' series, and one 10-inch 'B' series was transferred to the red-label 'L' series. 22 12-inch double-sided green-label 'J' series were transferred to the black-label 'K' series, and twelve 10-inch double-sided green-label 'Y' series were transferred to the black-label 'X' series. In addition, four 12-inch pink-label 'A' series and ten 12-inch red-label 'C' series were coupled and transferred to the blue-label 'D' series, some of these coupled with a new recording. Three 10-inch red-label records were also given couplings and transferred to the blue-label 'R' series.

November, 1925.

# ACO

*The 2'6 Record  
with the reputation*

*Exclusive Artists  
Latest Successes  
Perfect Recording*

"These discs achieve an ideal, perfect playing of fine music, perfectly recorded. What more can the gramophone enthusiast demand?"  
*Vide "The People."*

We have evidence from all quarters that gramophone enthusiasts in rapidly increasing numbers are becoming regular and persistent purchasers of ACO Records.

*Are you sufficiently stocked to meet the growing demand for  
Aco Records? Write or 'phone (Hol. 1740) "Aco" Dept.*

**Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd.**  
Duncan Avenue, Grays Inn Rd. W.C.1

of quality in every series will, of course, be maintained."

Along with the green-label band recordings at 6s. and 4s., the 12-inch and 10-inch black-label 'K' and 'X' series were also reduced to the same prices, from 6/6d. and 4/6d respectively.

In America some fourteen Vocalion models were reduced in price and ten new models were introduced by the New York company.

A new and cheaper record was put out by the London company in November 1922. This was the ACO, double-faced in 10-inch and 12-inch sizes, priced at 2/6d and 4/- respectively. The label was scarlet with gold printing. The design had been applied for as a registered trade mark eleven months earlier and the records were intended to compete with others of similar price on the market.<sup>3</sup>

A Vocalion portable machine was being advertised at this time; it measured 12 x 12 x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches and had a brown Morocco-grained goatskin case. It lacked the Graduola, and had a plated metal horn enclosed by a door which opened inwards to form part of one of the sides of the horn, like the Model C table grand introduced a year previously. The first advertisement to refer to the Graduola as fitted to 'many' (rather than all) Vocalions had appeared in May 1922. The only other new advertisement to appear in the year, in December, put the lowest priced machine at 9gns. (the portable) and dealers and public were invited to write for the name of the nearest agent.

The last new advertisement for "Aeolian Vocalion" machines, reverting to the original quotation marks, was in the PHONORECORD for January 1923. Throughout the whole series of advertisements, from late 1915, the people shown in the illustrations, enjoying the sound from Vocalions, were always from the upper strata of society, wearing evening suits, officers' uniforms, evening gowns and the fashions of the times. After the January 1923 advertisement, only Aco and Aeolian Vocalion records were advertised in the four trade papers.

Another unusual set of records was issued in January 1923. These were of Irish artists singing Irish songs, some in English and some in Irish Gaelic. The recordings were shared among six artists on a mixture of 10-inch and 12-inch discs which, although numbered within the current series, carried special labels with 'Aeolian Vocalion' printed in an Irish manner. A special illustrated booklet accompanied the records, written by Timothy O'Sullivan.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Coliseum, Guardsman, Homochord, Pathé, Actuelle, Regal, Scala, Tower, Winner, Imperial and Zonophone. Aeolian were pressing some of these themselves through their ownership of the Universal Music Co. Ltd. at Hayes, including the following: A. F. M. C. Citizen, Coliseum, Gamages, Guardsman, Homochord, Linguaphone, Little Marvel (for Woolworth's), Ludgate, Meloto, Scala Ideal and Tower.

<sup>4</sup> These records were also issued on the new Beltona label, belonging to the Murdoch Trading Company, whose discs, also pressed by the Universal Music Co., had first been put on sale in December 1922.

Eighty-two new artists had been added to the roster during 1922, including at least fifty-four from American matrices.

As wireless rapidly became a new source of entertainment and a hobby for receiver constructors, Aeolian opened special showrooms at Aeolian Hall, where wireless apparatus of their own manufacture was demonstrated and sold. In America, the Radio Corporation of America (later to acquire Victor) had erected a broadcasting aerial at the top of the Aeolian building in New York. A new recording supervisor was appointed in the Vocalion laboratories there, in charge of standard, classical and operatic recordings, following the resignation of T. P. Ratcliff. This was Harold Sandford, who was also a violinist.

In April 1923 an 8-guinea Vocalion portable was now on offer in Britain, with a case either of teak or real cowhide. Aeolian Vocalion's only 'cast recordings' were also put on sale in April. These were from Lilac Time, the artists being Clara Butterworth, Courtice Pounds and Percy Heming, and a special booklet was issued with the records.<sup>5</sup>

In July 1923 the American company decided to deal directly with retailers, cutting out the jobbers, except for the Vocalion Co. of Chicago. The next month a new series of 'race' records was introduced and records began to be issued on a weekly basis to dealers. During this time, Oscar W. Ray, the General Manager, had been in Europe on business. He returned to the U.S.A. in September having concluded some important contracts, and it was forecast that the coming year would be the best ever for the Vocalion red records. Fourteen new Vocalion models were announced, all with electric motors and gold-plated visible fittings. For October 1923, it was stated that all Vocalion red records would be in the double-face format thenceforth.

In Britain, in November another round of price reductions in the Aeolian Vocalion records was made; the 12-inch green label was now to be 6/6d., blue label 6/6d. and 4/6d., black 4/6d. and 3/-, and 10-inch brown 3/-. The pink and the red label records remained unchanged.

#### CONTINENTAL RECORDINGS FOR U.S.

The first recordings from the new European contracts appeared on the Vocalion red records in America in December 1923, the masters coming from the Polyphonwerke A.G. in Germany, and the Milano Laboratories in Italy, which supplemented some British recordings from the Aeolian Hall and Duncan Avenue studios of the Aeolian Co. Ltd. Under these new contracts Vocalion red records had 12,000 titles added to the repertoire; these included a special list of German Christmas recordings. Other recordings were of Polish, Russian, Hebrew, Italian and other German repertoires. A special catalogue of Polyphon recordings was available in January 1924.

<sup>5</sup> At this time, Percy J. Packman was in the news once more, but obviously not with the Aeolian Company, as he had joined Harry Gaydon, of Stentorphone fame, to form Phono Publicity Ltd.

In America, the Edridge R. Johnson and Browning patents were declared invalid but an appeal to a higher court was granted.

From March 1st 1924 the release of Vocalion red records reverted to monthly issues, and the Aeolian companies of New York and Missouri became official distributors of R.C.A.'s radio products. R.M. Kempton, General Manager of Vocalion records, also took charge of the radio distribution. From April 1924, London recordings began to appear regularly on red records.

In June, what were described as 'Magnificent recordings from the Polyphonwerke Studios' appeared on the red records, including the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Leo Blech, the Polyphon String Orchestra, the Michaelow Instrumental Quartette, Vasa Prihoda, violin, Arnold Foldessy, 'cello, and the Stem Orchester from the Hotel Adlon, Berlin. However, the Aeolian Companies' relatively short proprietorship of Aeolian Vocalion records was drawing to a close.

In August 1924 it was reported that the Aeolian Co. of New York had sold its 17-storey Aeolian Building, built in 1912, to the Schultz Cigar Stores Company, although it retained an option to occupy the building until May 1929. The Aeolian Hall within the building had a seating capacity of 1,100. Both music rolls and records had been made in the premises.

#### DEMISE OF AEOLIAN VOCALION RECORDS

On October 1st 1924 record prices were reduced yet again. Pink, red and green labels were discontinued and the repertoire still in the catalogue was transferred either to double-sided pink-label at 5/6d. and 4/- or double-sided black-label at 4/6d and 3/-. This second transfer of label categories explains the mixed-label sets of Vocalion records that one sometimes finds. It was about this time that Tremaine, the President, dismissed A.J. Mason, the Managing Director in London, with but fifteen minutes notice. I have no idea why this drastic move was considered necessary. The position was filled by C.K. Sugden.

A landmark in the red records was the issue of Beethoven's 9th Symphony from Polyphonwerke matrices, conducted by Seidler-Winkler. The next month, Brunswick-Balke-Collender announced the purchase of the Vocalion red record division of the New York Aeolian Company, with effect from January 2nd 1925. Brunswick were to maintain a separate selling organisation for the records. All the Aeolian-controlled retail stores in New York were now to stock Brunswick products (previously, Brunswick records were supplied only to stockists of Brunswick machines). Aeolian stated that they were withdrawing from the record field to develop their long-established musical instrument business, and were to continue selling Aeolian Vocalion machines.

In London, on December 18th 1924, after the American company's decision to sell its record business, the Aeolian Co. Ltd. resolved to reduce its share capital from £700,000 to £480,000. Almost a month later, on January 13th, the London company sold its record business to a newly floated public company, The Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd, for the sum £30,000. Part of this figure was represented by a minority stockholding of 8,572 ten-shilling shares in the new company. The latter also acquired the Hayes factory and London recording studio of the Universal Music Co. Ltd. for £40,000, this again including a minority stockholding of 11,428 ten-shilling

**'VOCALION' RECORDS**  
The finest recordings  
of eminent artists  
**AT POPULAR PRICES**

# Daily Mail

WORLD'S LARGEST DAILY NET SALE.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1925.

**'VOCALION'**  
Record Catalogue  
The list that saves  
you money  
**FREE ON REQUEST**



## Music lives again on **'VOCALION' RECORDS**

*The only full toned scratchless record—and the cheapest!*

It is a fact that no other gramophone record reproduces the living tones of all voices and instruments with such fidelity as the 'Vocalion', and combines complete absence of scratch with such magnificent volume and quality of tone; neither will you find, in any other record catalogue, the recordings of equally eminent artists at 'Vocalion' prices. It is easy to test this statement in the following ways:

*Make this test of 'Vocalion' quality.*  
**FIRSTLY**, simply play on your own instrument a record of any other make—however widely advertised—and immediately after play a 'Vocalion' Record of the same price and class of music. It will immediately appear that the voices produced under the performed 'Vocalion' recording process are immeasurably true to the living tones.

*SECONDLY*, that absence of scratch has not been achieved by any reduction of tone volume or quality. All the delicate and fine overtones that give to each instrument and voice its individuality and beauty—are received in their entirety.

*Make this test of 'Vocalion' value.*  
**THIRDLY**, after this test, take your 'Vocalion' catalogue and note the names of the world famous artists whose finer recordings are offered at the popular 'Vocalion' prices. Carefully compare these with your price book or any other record catalogue; you will then realize that no other record can offer you such artists and such exquisite recording at 'Vocalion' prices.

No gramophone owner can afford to neglect the great strides that the 'Vocalion' is making on his behalf, both in securing recordings of the best quality far in advance of any other, and in offering superb recordings by eminent artists at prices which mean a substantial saving.

**TWO PRICES ONLY**  
Pink Label 12 inch 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> · 10 inch 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>  
Blue Label 12 inch 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> · 10 inch 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

CHEAP AND POPULAR—ALL DOUBLE SIDED  
Of all leading Music Dealers throughout the country.

VOCALION  
GRAMOPHONE CO., LTD.  
Duncan Avenue, Gray's Inn Road.  
LONDON, W.C.1

The 'Vocalion' Record Catalogue saves you money—**A POSTCARD BRINGS IT TO YOU.**  
Our 1925 Catalogue, available at all leading music dealers or post free on request, is packed with good things. The best of every possible type of music is represented in 10 pages.



When writing to advertisers kindly mention "The Gramophone and Talking Machine News."

**SEND A POSTCARD  
TO-DAY and regularly  
receive the monthly  
'Vocalion' Bulletin.  
Always up to date in its recordings  
of current music, specially  
produced, and written by  
one of the foremost musical critics  
of the day.**

shares in the new company.

Charles K. Sugden, Managing Director of the Aeolian Co. Ltd, consented to become Managing Director of the new company. The transfer of the two businesses was deemed to date from December 31st 1924.

It was estimated that the record business, since sales began in December 1920, had grossed a profit to the Aeolian Co. Ltd of around £37,750, and in the last six months the factory had been working at full capacity and twenty more presses could have been in use had they been available. Sales had been up by 300,000 over the corresponding six months in the previous year.

The Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd. continued pressing the existing matrice, but the records were simply labelled 'Vocalion'. New Vocalion and Aco records were also issued for the next thirty-one months or so, when the labels were abandoned altogether. During 1923 and 1924, another seventy artists had recorded for the Aeolian Vocalion label, about half of them from American red record matrices. It appears that none of the Polyphonwerke or Milano Laboratories matrice were used for British issues.

FINIS

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## LONDON MEETING

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The London Meeting on 24th September took place at the Bloomsbury Institute and this was our Chairman's night. As most members will be aware, our Chairman's interest is in machines, particularly portables. Also, later in the month, the sale by auction of most of the EMI machine collection was to take place. These two things were combined in a lecture and discussion, illustrated by lantern slides.

Many of us will have caught fleeting glimpses of the machines shown on BBC television, but this gave very little idea of the immense scope of the collection. The machines ranged from early tinfoil, one a weight-driven machine by the London Stereoscopic Co., a Lioret, the familiar Edison Gems, any number of horn gramophones, a most interesting experimental HMV pleated diaphragm model, in which the diaphragm frame was carried by wheels on rails, and the needle described a true radial path across the record. Other unusual machines, too numerous to mention here, were shown and discussed.

Our Chairman had actually seen and touched most of the machines beforehand, and was able to answer questions put by the meeting and also make his own observations, which made a very enjoyable evening. It may be said, also, that this was a unique lecture, because it is very unlikely that another sale of such dimensions will ever occur.

L.W.

# **Had Edison Realised ....**

J. P. AGNARD DESCRIBES AN ACCIDENTAL DISCOVERY MADE WITH A PIECE OF TINFOIL.

To celebrate the Centenary of the invention of the phonograph, I started making a replica of Edison's first tinfoil machine from the blue-prints issued by the Edison museum at West Orange.

One night, having found a small quantity of tinfoil in the photogrammetric department at Laval University, Quebec (why there?), I wrapped the foil round the mandrel as soon as the reproducer (which served also served as a recorder) was ready. The parts were screwed in position on a wooden board. Being French by origin, I of course shouted 'La Marseillaise' into the mouthpiece. Having reached the end of the grooves, I went back to the beginning and, in a deathly hush, started to turn the handle for the second time. My heart missed a beat at the faint and quavering vibrations of the 'Marseillaise' and, for a while, I was sure that the spirit of Edison was not far away.

Of course, after two or three playings of the same recording, the grooves were flattened and no more sound came out of them. As I had very little foil, and the grooves were very far apart, I tried to push the foil along a little bit, to use the areas between the grooves. However, the indented gooves prevented this, so I tried to turn the foil while pushing it, and to my great surprise the metal started to move like a nut on a bolt, and I was able to unscrew it completely, although without quite preserving its cylindrical form.

This accidental discovery set me thinking, and it occurred to me that if the foil could be taken off the mandrel without breaking the indentations, it would be possible to mould them and give them permanence. The first problem was to consolidate the surface after recording, to be able to unscrew it without deformations. Several attempts were made by gluing on newspaper, then cardboard, but I found the best method was to apply several coats of white woodworking adhesive.

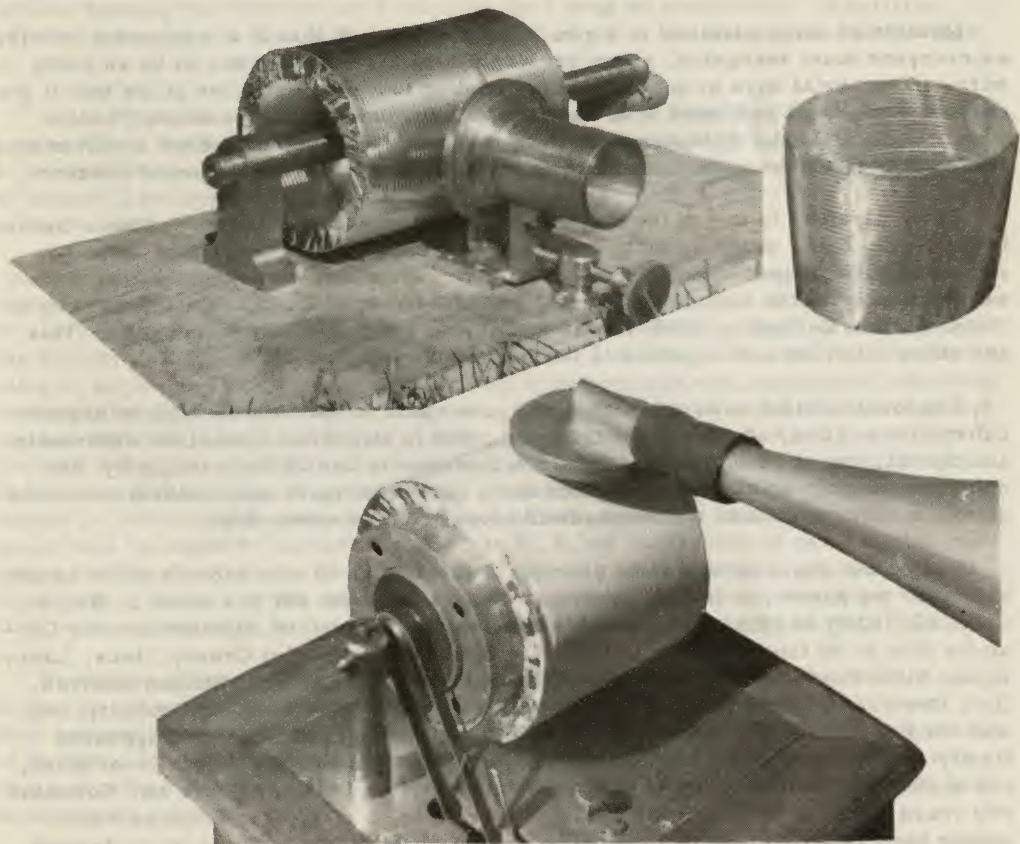
When this was done and dry, the foil (I subsequently used two or three turns of kitchen aluminium foil, which gave the same results) could easily be unscrewed from the mandrel. Polymer resin could then be moulded from the inside and the foil was subsequently peeled from the exact replica of the recording.

To listen to the result, I modified the mandrel of a French cylinder phonograph with floating horn and reproducer, and the sounds came out very loud and clear. Admittedly, Edison had pounds if not tons of tinfoil and thus was not pushed to do what I did, but if he had been we would have hundreds of recordings dating from 1878, and the phonograph industry could have started sooner and maybe in another direction. I do not see that a single thing I did would not have been possible at that time.

Of course, this could have been done only with the first and second tinfoil phono-

graphs, because nearly all the others have a groove along the mandrel in which the tinfoil is fixed with a piece of wood.

Nobody can change history, and a posteriori discoveries made in the light of later knowledge are of small value. However, everybody will admit, I hope, that it is a pity that this accidental discovery did not occur to Edison.



The upper illustration shows the replica tinfoil phonograph with the tinfoil partly unscrewed, and a foil 'cylinder' on the right.

Below is a close-up of the moulded cylinder mounted on a French phonograph with a suitably adapted mandrel

# PEOPLE, PAPER AND THINGS

by George Frow

An opportunity to acquire a Regina Hexaphone in 'good working condition' with original header board has been passed the Society's way by Mr. Dennis Yates (tel. Nottingham (0602) 205441), who says he is not interested in selling, but only in acquiring in exchange quality pre-1924 wireless equipment or a Baird Televisor.

Mention of early wireless is a reminder of how much this is a misnomer; surely, as everyone must recognise, every set was full of wires, there had to be an earth wire and an aerial wire or multiple wires leading to a pole or a tree at the end of the garden. The word persisted with somewhat more accuracy in schoolboy French where Le T.S.F. (Le Telephon sans Fils) made more sense, but where the German Rundfunk, or round-spark, came into radio operation has always seemed obscure.

Early wireless is one of the activities of the many-sided Clockwork Music Group in the North-East, which a month or so ago enjoyed a lecture on vintage wireless sets; the unusual part was that tapes of archive recordings were transmitted via air waves to activate the contemporary set, and these ranged from Captain Eckersley's '2-LO Writtle Calling' to 1939-45 war leaders, a spell of over twenty years. This and other activities are reported in the Group's recent News Letter.

The local Kentish newspaper recently gave space to the 90th birthday of soprano Lilian Stiles-Allen, who lives not far away. She is still much connected with music and the training of young people, and Julie Andrews is one of those taught by her many years ago. Madame Stiles-Allen had a career in opera and oratorio and made quite a number of Edison Bell records in acoustic and electric days.

The recent death of Mae West prompts a question as to how records made by her and other top American Decca/Brunswick artists were put out in a block by British Columbia (EMI) in 1938; under what contractual exchanges and adjustments was Columbia able to do this? Others in the block included two (early) Crosby discs, Lanny Ross, Alice Faye, Irene Dunne, Dorothy Lamour, Grace Moore, Maxine Sullivan, Dick Powell and Jimmie Durante. This initial issue was given much publicity, but was not followed by any more. Grace Moore's 'One Night of Love' had appeared firstly on a Brunswick blue label in Great Britain, then with the conventional black, and it also had a shilling excursion out as Rex 8871 in 1936, and here was Columbia two years later marketing it for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times that price, a risky step in times when people knew how to count their pennies. Although Mae West was never in demand on records in this country, and her films were shot down mercilessly by the critics, her name has passed into the dictionaries in respect of the inflatable and uncomfortable life jacket of the War.

Details have been received of two re-issues of cylinder material on 1.p. records. The first are on four sides and offered by Roland Kupper [REDACTED] Basel, Switzerland). These are in a double album with a handsome colour photograph of the Lorelei phonograph on the cover. The four sides contain forty-two sel-

ections of 2-minute and 4-minute cylinders, Side A being given over to Edison, Edison-Bell, Columbia and Clarion 2-minuters, Side B to wax Amberols and Sides C and D to Blue Amberols. It is not possible to list the titles, but the bulk of the cylinders come from American listings, closely followed by British numbers with three or four out of the German catalogue. The items are all of popular music, and with four sides to fill, it occurs that consideration might have been given to a side for each type of music and thus broaden the landscape. However this is a comment made without hearing the records and a lot must have hung on availability. Enquiries should be directed to Roland Kupper. The quoted price for this album with postage is Sw. Fr. 36.50, or about £8.80 Sterling.

A recording of exceptional interest has come to hand from Ray Phillips of Los Angeles, whose Bettini collection - the better part of it - has been transferred to 1.p. It is hoped to review this in the next issue, as soon as arrangements have been made to import it for members' availability. These are some of the World's rarest recordings; most are operatic, and go back to the 1890's.

Now to end on two personal notes; firstly, in his kind summing-up of my cylinder programme on page 140 of the December issue, JMCK drew attention to copies of early society formation material in my possession which I promised could go into the Society archives when I have finished with it. I mentioned this more as an invitation to anyone prepared to research the early phonograph and gramophone societies in the United Kingdom, including our own. Combined with an access to talking machine and musical journals of the day, there is additional material in the Society archive and in my files to enable anyone to compile such a history. At present though, there seem to be few or no photographic records, and these may never have existed except as portrait likenesses of one or two of the pioneers. Many years ago an acquaintance managed to upgrade his B.A. to M.A. on the history of early talking machine societies, although after I had helped him, he unintentionally omitted to send me a copy. There are the makings of quite an acceptable thesis for anyone with the time and inclination to do the research. Let the Society assist you to your PhD!

Secondly, although Christmas was two months ago, those of us who involve ourselves in the running of this Society would like to extend our thanks for the very kind seasonal messages and cards that came in then, many of exceptional originality of design. They were much appreciated if not all answered individually, and are a measure of the pleasant world-wide relationships that have come out of C. L. P. G. S. membership. Thank you.

~~~~~

## **PHONOFAIR 1981**

This year's Phonofair is to be held by the Home Counties branch at Pyrford Village Hall, Woking, Surrey, on June 20th. Full details will be circulated separately, but members should make a note of this date now. There will be a competition, judged by Members' ballot, for machines in the following two categories: A) The most original machine: B) The best restored machine. There will be stalls for the sale of machines and related material and records, and two short talks will be given.

## . . Particulars of Illustrations. . .

FIG. 1. Is the ordinary Tapered Arm Machine adapted for Neelite Records by means of Repro-Neo. (Fig. 2.)

FIG. 3. Another view of a Tapered Arm Machine adapted for Neelite Records. Other fittings slightly different in construction from Repro-Neo are supplied for fitting to any other type of machine.

FIG. 4. This shows the new Neophone Reproducer fitted to a Neophone.

Figs. 5 & 6. Show the special fittings for rendering the Neelite Universal Reproducer applicable for use on all Disc Machines.

Figs. 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10. Show the various other fitments for different makes of machines.

Neophone Limited issue a special instruction sheet with each Reproducer or Repro-Neo, so that when ordering it is only necessary to mention the type of machine used in order to receive the correct parts.



**NEOPHONE LTD.,  
1, Worship St., Finsbury Sq., E.C.**

Telegraphic Address: "DISCOPHONE, LONDON."

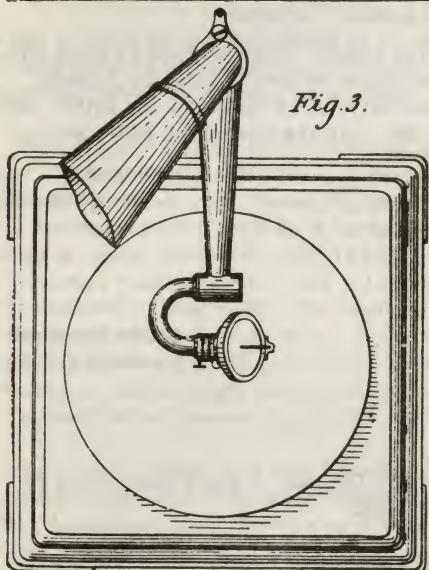
Telephone: No. 258 LONDON WALL.

NEW YORK. PARIS. BRUSSELS. BERLIN. MILAN.



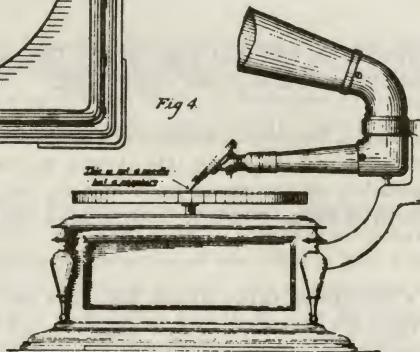
*Fig. 1*

*Tapered Arm Machine  
adapted for  
Neolite Records*



*Fig. 3.*

*The elevation of ordinary  
Tapered Arm Machine,  
with Repro-Neo attached.*

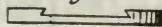


*Neolite Sound Box fitted : Neophon Machine.*

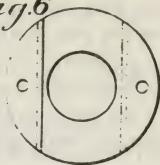
## ILLUSTRATIONS OF NEW DEVICES. . .

[Particulars on Opposite Page.]

*Fig. 5.*



*Fig. 6.*



## NEOPHONE LTD.,

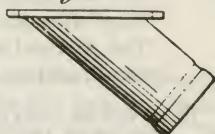
1, Worship Street,  
Finsbury Square,  
E.C.

*Fig. 2*



*Repro-Neo  
for adapting  
Tapered Arm Machines  
to play Neolite Records.*

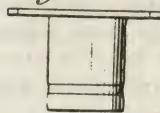
*Fig. 7.*



*Fig. 8.*



*Fig. 9.*



*Fig. 10.*



*Fittings for adapting  
ordinary Sound Boxes to  
play Neolite Records, and  
Neolite Sound Boxes to  
play Disc Records of  
any make.*

# Correspondence

Gravesend,  
Kent.

Dear Sir,

I write in connection with an article by Frank Andrews in HILLANDALE for June 1979. Part of the article dealt with Rex records.

I was recently in the U.S.A. and found a fourth example of this name. The example I have is a 10-inch size and has a black label with gold and red lettering. It is double-sided and is of the hill-and-dale type. The label bears the following legends:

- 'Rex the Keynote of Music.'
- 'Play with Rex Sappie Needle.'
- 'The Record of Quality.'
- 'Rex Talking Machine Corporation.'

The record bears the price 75c. printed on the label. The two titles I have are 'Moonshine Sally' by Campbell Burr (duet) and 'Sunshine of your smile' by Joseph Phillips. The numbers are 5371-B and A respectively. Interestingly the latter title is the same song recently recorded and taken to No. 1 in the charts by Mike Berry.

Yours faithfully,  
David Marks.

~~~~~  
South Norwood  
15th December 1980.

Dear Christopher,

Your article on the last page of the October issue prompts me to write about similar peculiarities in my own collection.

Some time ago I obtained a beautiful wooden-horn Apollo dating from 1908 (according to its previous owner.) In its early life it was re-motored with an enormous Lindstrom motor and probably at the same time had an extraordinary speed controller added. This is calibrated from 0 to 30, which does not relate to gramophone recording speeds.

Another machine is a Polyphon table grand which is said to have been brought to this country after the Great War by an army Sergeant. The speed controller is calibrated 0-110 which includes the range of normal recording speeds but is in itself unusual. I was not aware that Polyphon made gramophones.

Yours sincerely, Steve Paget.

Referring to Steve Paget's letter on the previous page, I suppose that 0-30 makes some sense - it provides a comparative scale, rather like the Regulo scale on a gas cooker, without mentioning rpm or degrees Fahrenheit. Since writing the note in the October issue, I have looked at a Fultograph, but of course it had to be the odd one out, which did not have a Grubu motor, so the fact that its speed control had an ordinary gramophone scale proves nothing about those fitted with Grubu 'engines'. Polyphon most certainly made gramophones, including some Klingsors apparently, and the combination of Polyphon and Deutsche Grammophon in the 1920s gave rise to Polydor and, more recently, the vast Polygram conglomerate which centres on Philips and even includes Decca records now. - Ed.

~~~~~

Floral Park, NY, USA.

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

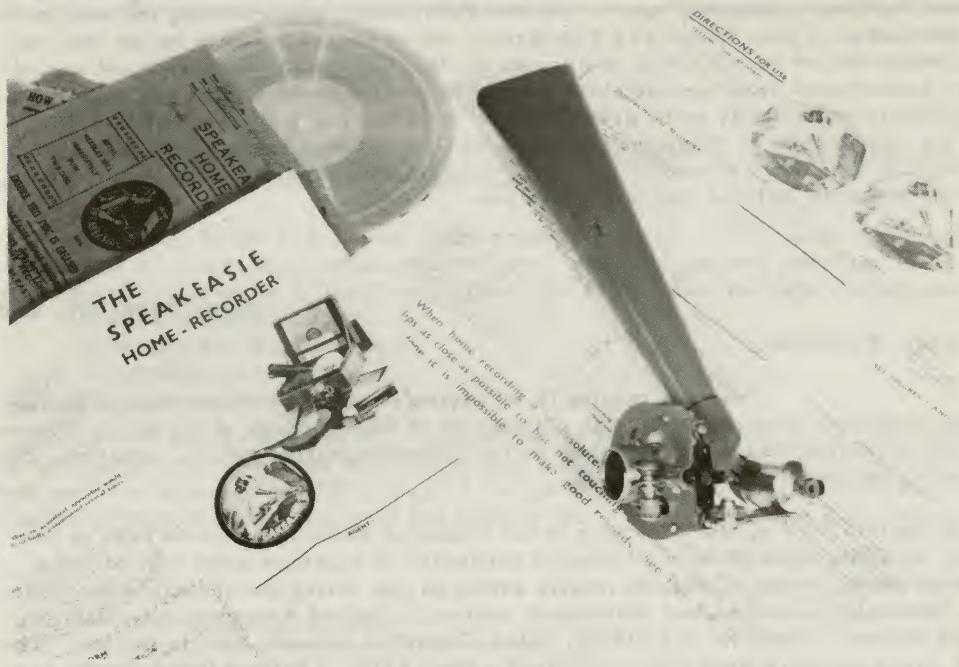
I enjoyed reading G. W. Taylor's article on Victor Matrix Dating, as the subject of record dating is an old passion of mine. (Each to his own.) I'm not all that surprised that he is 'defeated' by the Columbia matrix series, however. The following information may be of help.

In the mid 1970's, while working in the Columbia Records Archives here in New York, on some other matters, I found it necessary to organize some sort of 'road map' to the numerous Columbia matrix series in use during the acoustic era. This was eventually published as a three-part article in Record Research magazine (65, Grand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11205), titles 'Columbia Acoustic Matrix Series'. The R. R. issue numbers were 135 - 137, June - Nov. 1975. I believe these issues are still available from R. R.; the study is fairly comprehensive, and includes a dating chart for the principal series. I also had an article in Hillandale some years ago (April 1971) describing the Victor popular release series, and its rate of issue over the years, which might help clear up some of the questions regarding irregularities in the number of recordings made.

Perhaps I could take this opportunity to mention the 16th Annual Convention of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, which is scheduled for April 23-5 1981, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA. A number of interesting presentations on early recordings will be given; more details will follow when the programme (which I am organising) is firm.

Sadly, word is conveyed of the death of Douglas Stanbury, who recorded for a number of labels in the 1920s. He was born in Canada 81 years ago. Another pioneer artist, particularly on Edison records of the 1910's and 1920's, Gladys Rice, is now ill and alone in a New York nursing home. An occasional card from those who remember her might not be out of place - she is at the Florence Nightingale Nursing Home, [REDACTED]

Sincerely,  
Tim Brooks.



## TECHNICAL FORUM

Due to some inexplicable aberration in the printing process, a vital dimension was omitted from the illustration which accompanied Mike Field's article on reaming cylinders in the October issue (Page 110, Fig. 1). The small end of the basic mandrel there shown should be 1.580 in.

This column provides answers to technical problems posed by Members, and enquiries should be addressed to Mike Field at 116, Tanhouse Lane, Malvern Link, Worcs. Mike finds it difficult to answer hypothetical questions - he much prefers to work on an actual problem which someone has encountered in the repair or restoration of a machine. So please keep the questions coming, and we can all benefit from Mike's practical knowledge and lucid explanations.

~~~~~

On the subject of errors, I am indebted to Alan Kelly for pointing out a very stupid one on my part on Page 119 of the last issue; I referred to the 'Phonographen Walzer' on the front cover and said that Walzer means 'cylinders'. It is Walzen which means cylinders, and Walzer is the German for Waltz.

# SPEAKEASIE

by Phil Bailey

The Speakeasie Home Recording Outfit was marketed during the early thirties as a means of making recordings using 'any' gramophone. It appears to be similar to the Fay and Kingston outfits.

The attachment is fitted to the tone-arm in place of the normal soundbox. A ten-inch record is placed on the turntable and a blank 6-inch aluminium disc placed on top. The recording needle is placed near the rim of the metal disc and is tracked by a slave needle running in the groove of the shellac record. Recordings are made by talking into the metal mouthpiece, causing the diaphragm to vibrate and thus cut the record in the time-honoured fashion.

The Speakeasie was produced for Speakeasie Home Recorders Ltd., 24 Berners Street, London W.1. In 1931 it was offered at 20/-; it was, of course, perfect and endorsed by worthies such as Compton Mackenzie and Christopher Stone. Nevertheless there must have been some market resistance as by 1934 The Home Recorder Co, 135 Green Street, Eastbourne, was offering the same remarkable instrument for a mere 7/6d.

The Speakeasie in my possession was packed in a strong cardboard box, with spare discs, instructions and fibre needles. The metal parts are well made and painted red. Experimental recording has proved rather disappointing. The device will only work with a powerful motor fully wound, and a stentorian voice is needed to make any impression whatever on the aluminium. However it may be past its peak performance and tuning could possibly improve it.

It would be interesting to learn of members' experience with home recordings both cylinder and disc; neither seems as straightforward as it appears. The most successful I know of were made by a friend using celluloid sheet discs and a horn gramophone tracked by attaching it to an Edison Standard with a linking bar. The recording head was the normal soundbox with loud needles ground flat on one side, i.e. at right angles to the groove.

(See illustrations on front cover and facing page)

~~~~~

Just to add confusion, I have found an advertisement in The Gramophone of April 1931 giving the company name as Electrocolor Products Ltd, 63 New Broad St, London, and giving the price of the complete outfit as 42/6d. The original, red-painted Speakeasies used what was basically an Orchorsol soundbox, without its 'lifebelt', with the system of stylus-bar mounting favoured in early Edwardian times by Nicole. I have a later Speakeasie soundbox which is an ordinary cheap diecast affair typical of the 1930s. Possibly the reason for Phil's lack of success in recording could be that the aluminium has hardened over the last fifty years. - Ed.

# EDGE START

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE PATHÉ EDGE-START DISCS, PRESENTED BY LEN WATTS  
AT THE JULY 1980 MEETING OF THE SOCIETY AT THE ECCENTRIC CLUB.

Based on research by Frank Andrews

~~~~~

The first edge-start records made by Pathé for sale in England were pressed for Diamond Disc Record Ltd. of 81, City Road, London, but it seems possible that the first edge-start Pathé sold anywhere were those made by or for the Pathé Freres Phonograph Company Inc., of Wilmington, Delaware and of New York. It has been established that this American company sold centre-start discs for a short time. A catalogue of these has been seen, in which many items were the same as English centre-start issues, and were presumably made in France. The titles suggest that this catalogue dates from July 1914.

Attempts had been made as early as 1908 to establish a market in the U.S.A. for Pathé products, but there was the problem of patent infringement. Columbia licensed Pathé to import, and in 1912 some American capitalists formed the company to manufacture machines and records, under Emile Pathé's supervision.

By July 1913, this American company had acquired exclusive control of all Pathé products, including trade-marks and patents, but it was made clear that it was entirely separate from the French Company. By 1914 the business was expanding and being equipped with new machinery, and Russell Hunting (famous for his Michael Casey sketches) became their first chief of recording. By September 1914 they were in full production. The discs were 11½ and 14 inches in diameter, but a 20-inch disc which was envisaged never appeared. The foxtrot was making a tentative appearance and Pathé engaged a professional dancing couple to supervise their dance records. The earliest edge-start discs appeared in September 1914, and certainly all American centre-start discs had been re-made to edge-start by 1915.

Back in wartime Britain, centre-start discs imported from France were still being sold. Although the edge-start Diamond Disc records were meant to be ready by July 1914, the war had delayed this until January 1915. The City Road premises were said to have the finest recording studios in the country, several firms having previously used them. Most of the first issues of Diamond records carried Pathé recordings.

By March 1915 The Diamond Disc Record Ltd. had been approached from several countries with enquiries concerning the setting up of agencies, even as far afield as China, but the war made this extremely difficult. Machines and parts were also made at the City Road premises. After six separate lists of records, a complete catalogue was out in February 1916. In some cases pseudonyms were used for the artists, e.g. Bingley Shaw (George Baker), Phyllis Bates (Carrie Herwin) and surely the most comical of all Charles Penrose's aliases, Laffan B. Merry. In April 1916 Diamond Disc Record Ltd. moved to larger premises.

Strikingly attractive records  
from the

JULY



**Pathé**  
**RECORDS**  
**PLAY ON ANY**  
**GRAMOPHONE**

by means of the  
Pathé "Universal"  
Sound - Box which  
thereby creates for  
the shrewd dealer  
an additional record  
business.

Moral : PUSH  
The 'UNIVERSAL'  
SOUND - BOX



**LIST**

WALDORF-ASTORIA DANCE ORCH.

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 5660   Marion, you'll soon be marryin' me —Medley   | Fox-Trot (introducing "Maybe") |
| Just like the house that Jack built                 |                                |
| Fox-Trot (introducing "Cindy")                      |                                |
| 1353   Happy—One-Step .. .. Hugo Frey               | Kneight                        |
| Korinthia—One-Step .. ..                            |                                |
| 1360   That Naughty Waltz .. .. Ley                 | Earl-Fiorito                   |
| Isle of Paradise.. ..                               |                                |
| THE PALACE TRIO (Piano, Saxophone and Accordion)    |                                |
| 1348   Missy—Fox-Trot .. .. Robe-Stanton            |                                |
| Lone Star—Fox-Trot .. ..                            | Wiedoeft                       |
| BILLY JONES (Tenor) with Orch.                      |                                |
| Jinga-Bula-Jing-Jing .. Lewis-Young-Jerome          |                                |
| 1354   At the Choclate Bon-Bon Ball .. ..           | With Accordion Accompaniment   |
| Pease-Nelson-Edelheit                               |                                |
| LEWIS JAMES & ELLIOTT SHAW (Vocal Duets) with Orch. |                                |
| Beautiful Annabell Lee Bryan-Mehlinger-Meyer        |                                |
| 1363   Mammy's Good Night Lullaby .. ..             | Jerome von-Tilzer              |

Issued by

PATHÉ FRÈRES PATHÉPHONE LTD., Barry Road, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W.10.

June, 1921.

In the same month, the American company began including British recorded artists in their monthly release supplements. Pathé in England had already issued such American artists as Ada Jones, Irving Gillette, Byron G. Harlan, Campbell and Burr, the American Republic Band and van Epps' Banjo Orchestra. In June 1916 Pathé Frères Pathéphone Ltd. took over the business of Diamond Disc Record Ltd. and continued to issue the discs. The word 'Double' was used inconsistently in advertisements, although the records, which at first had been called merely 'Diamond Record' were now being called 'Diamond Double Disc'. At a later date, when the discs were being pressed in England, and a paper label was attached, they were called 'Pathé Diamond Record'. Thus, by this take-over, the Diamond record became the first edge-start disc manufactured by Pathé Frères.

The July 1916 American releases were the last to be called  $11\frac{1}{2}$ -inch. Thereafter '12-inch' was substituted; this seems to have persisted until the end of the Pathé label as such, although experience has shown that they always retained the original 28cm size in practice.

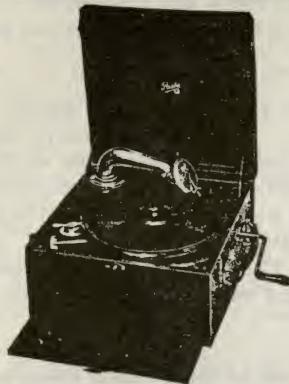
Arrangements were being made for the manufacture of all Pathé products in England, and eventually a site was chosen at West Drayton in Middlesex; a factory was built and equipped by July 1917. A Canadian factory was also opened at Toronto. The new records from West Drayton were to be called 'Roosters', with the Pathé cock as a trade-mark. The cock was to be coloured white, red or gold to denote price category. (Pathé centre-start discs had been a uniform price regardless of the artist's status.) The prices were to be 3/-, 5/- and 7/6d. The Diamond Disc was to be 2/- (previously 1/6d.) Most of the Rooster discs were simply re-masterings of the centre-start repertoire. During 1918 new recordings started to appear, although they were few in number.

August 1918 saw the release of three complete operas, transcribed from centre-start, and the last mention of 14-inch discs in America. Then, from January 1919, there were no more releases of Pathé discs in Britain until the 1920 season got underway in late 1919. Production problems at West Drayton had never been satisfactorily resolved, and late in 1919 the French company relinquished control of affairs in England and the American company took over.

In June 1919 the latter introduced the 'Actuelle' machine. American Pathé was now to handle all Pathé products for the Western Hemisphere, although two members of the Pathé family were to be London managers. The West Drayton factory was being re-equipped, and the American plant at Brooklyn was being enlarged. A new Pathé label was introduced in Britain, called the 'Scroll', due to the scroll-shaped cartouche in which the title was printed. The Scroll was coloured black, red, buff, blue or white depending on price, from 4/6d. to 12/6d.

As with the Rooster label, a large part of the centre-start repertoire (some of it very old) was transferred to the new label. Pathé was taken to court by one singer for issuing old recordings represented as being contemporary. New recordings were added, but as with the centre-start discs, old numbers were re-used as records

# BEST VALUE FOR 1922-1923



Portable. Price £4 10s.

Exceptionally  
generous terms for

## DEALERS



A2. Price £4 15s.  
(from Nov. 1st).



A11.  
Price 48 gns.

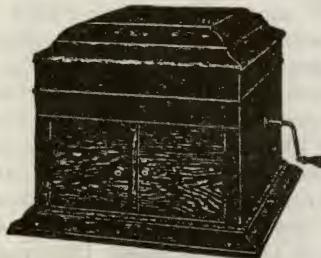


A13. Price 80 gns.



A6.  
Price 28 gns.

## RECORDS

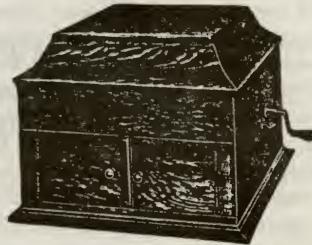


A4. Price 16 gns.  
and A5 (mahogany) 18 gns.

Pathe (Sapphire). Require no Needles.  
Actuelle (Needle-cut). First with the Titles.

From 3/-  
upwards.

Write for Catalogues &  
name of nearest dealer to



A3. Price 10 gns.

**PATHE FRÈRES PATHÉPHONE, Ltd., Barry Road, Stonebridge Park,  
LONDON, N.W.10.**

were deleted.

In May 1920 Government restrictions put a stop to enlargement of the West Drayton factory, but an existing factory was found at Stonebridge Park. Pathé were feeling the effects of rivalry, not only from the big names like HMV and Columbia, but from a number of cheaper labels as well. Research shows that Pathé in Britain was never viable in the post-war period.

1921 saw many American issues on Pathé Scroll-label records, and in March British Pathé exhibited Actuelle machines at a trade fair. The Belgian factory was now again in production after its destruction in the war, but American Pathé experienced some difficulties with staff changes, and a complete shut-down for re-equipping of the Brooklyn plant. Production re-started on 29th August 1921. American Pathé business was increasing, and there were many additions to the catalogue, including items from more than fifteen foreign repertoires. The new Actuelle machines were being fitted with a parchment cone reproducer instead of the usual soundbox, tone-arm and horn.

In October 1921 control of the British company reverted to the French concern, who set about introducing the Actuelle record to Britain. Most of the recordings were duplicated on the Scroll label, but later on many appeared on Actuelle only.

Towards the end of the year changes took place in the personnel of the American company, including the resignation of the Chairman, and the company was placed in the hands of the receivers. The assets were more than enough to pay off the creditors, but the company was to be re-organised on a stronger basis. Recording continued and records were being shipped to Britain.

Early in 1922 the name 'Difisor' was registered as a trade-mark in Britain, to be applied to the parchment cone reproducer machines. These first appeared in April.

The summer saw plans for the manufacture of radio equipment and the Pathé Sound Wave Corporation was formed in Brooklyn. Combined radio and gramophone instruments were made, and good business was being done with Actuelle records, now reduced to 55 cents. The Perfect record was introduced, without any acknowledgement that it was a Pathé product. The American company was sold to the creditors on October 30th, and the Pathé Freres Radio and Phonograph Corporation was formed. It seems likely that at this time, all old stocks of American Pathé records were shipped to Britain, which would account for the American-labelled discs with a small superimposed label with the English number. The last advertisement for American vertical-cut Pathé records appeared in November 1922. In April 1923 the price of Actuelle records was reduced to two for one dollar, and the first catalogue was issued.

In Britain in mid-1923 the first portable Pathéphone came on the market, along with five new cabinet machines with the option of spring or electric motor. Towards the end of the year, all Scroll records and Pathéphones were reduced in price. British Pathé continued to offer its vertical-cut records to an ever-decreasing market in

1924 and 1925. American Pathé announced the new electrical recording process in September 1925, but British Pathé kept quiet. In fact, the last issues of Scroll label records (12-inch in October 1926 and 10-inch in May 1927) had not been recorded electrically.

American Pathé had promised the new recordings for October 1925, but it seems they did not materialise until January 1927. Some electric masters were supplied by a Canadian firm, and issued on the Actuelle and Perfect labels, but the name Pathé was absent from the label. Actuelle needle-cut records were the first to be announced as electrically recorded in Britain in April 1927; a new Pathé Perfect record came out in December 1927, but these and Actuelles ceased in December 1928. The demise of all Pathé products in Britain was occasioned in December 1928 by the sale of the French company to the Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. of London, which had absorbed other companies. All Pathé's stock of parts was bought up by the Scala Record Company. The Pathé label continued in France, and electrically recorded vertical-cut discs were issued.

In America in 1928 and 1929 Pathé merged with Cameo Records, and the business was taken over by the American Record Corporation. The Actuelle label was discontinued in March 1930, but the Perfect continued until April 1938.

## Special Selections from September Supplement



(Sapphire)

&

## Actuelle

(Needle-cut)

5110	{ There is a Green Hill ..	.. Vocal
	{ The Lost Chord ..	.. Vocal
5159	{ Phi Phi ..	Fox-trot
	{ Phi Phi ..	.. Vale
1459	{ "SMILIN' THROUGH	Violin Solo
	{ The Willow Tree ..	'Cello Solo
1544	{ In my Tippy Canoe ..	.. ..
	{ Dream Kiss ..	.. ..
1549	{ Sing me to Sleep ..	.. Vocal
	{ The Home Song ..	.. Vocal
1553	{ Plantation Lullaby ..	Vocal
	{ You won't be Sorry ..	Vocal

10277	{ Everybody Step ..	.. Fox-Trot
	{ Fooling Me ..	.. Fox-Trot
10289	{ "STUMBLING	Fox-Trot
	{ Please do it Again ..	.. Fox-Trot
10284	{ Miserere ..	" Il Trovatore "
	{ Softly Awakes my Heart ..	" Samson & Delilah "
10287	{ That's how I believe in You ..	Vocal
	{ If you only knew ..	.. Vocal
10288	{ Plantation Lullaby ..	Vocal
	{ You won't be Sorry ..	Vocal

**PATHÉ FRÈRES PATHÉPHONE LTD.,**  
Barry Road, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W.10.

## CASH FROM OLD NEEDLES

---

When you replace a gramophone needle do you throw away the used one? Most of us do. Instead we could be helping the ecology and our own economy by recycling valuable material.

A used Loud Tone needle is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  grains of pure steel. Extra loud needles are roughly a carat each or, if you are an apothecary, five to the scruple. Steel prices are low at the moment, owing to the depressed demand from industry but, even so, scrap still fetches something like £12 to £15 per ton. Just consider how many records that money would buy and you will see that it is well worth saving those 'useless' needles. Every time you discard one you are throwing away £0.0000026. Or even more.

Your local Yellow Pages will list the scrap metal merchants in your area; shop around to obtain the best offer. Remember that scrap merchants find it inconvenient to handle small quantities: you will get a better price if you store the needles and sell them a ton at a time. If your household scales are of the sort which will not weigh up to a ton you can obtain an accurate measure simply by counting the needles. For Loud Tone, 4,480,000 is about right, so long as they have each been played no more than once.

The figures given here apply to British needles such as HMV, Columbia, Songster etc. They are not accurate for needles of continental manufacture since European needles of the same weight are, in fact, much heavier. As an example, where 1,000 British needles weigh only 8oz. the same quantity of identical European needles will tip the scale at over 226 grammes. Further complications arise with foreign needles which are weighed in Rands. Readers interested in weight calculations for Continental needles should write to me enclosing good examples of the tins to establish the particular brand. I will try to reply personally but regret I cannot undertake to return the tins.

Ted Cunningham.

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### London Meeting

OCTOBER 25

After the refreshments kindly provided by John McKeown to follow the Annual General Meeting, Members were entertained by a small exhibition and demonstration of several machines.

John McKeown played his HMV Model 511, on which the No. 4 soundbox had been fitted with softer gaskets, giving improved bass response. Dave Roberts then dem-

onstrated several machines. An Edison Home phonograph with a repeating attachment and a large flower horn not originally available in the country was followed by a red Gem with 'K' reproducer (Florrie Forde record), and a Model B Fireside (for 4 minute records only) dating from 1911, with another unorthodox horn - a blue floral one. A volume control was incorporated in the elbow between the reproducer and horn. On this machine we heard Peter Dawson in the Toreador's Song. Then came a Triumph with an 11-panel Cygnet horn, and another machine with one of the rare 'Duplex' reproducers.

Dave's demonstration finished with three disc machines; an HMV fitted with a World Record Controller played a World record successfully, and then a Mikiphone was assembled and played, followed by one of the 1947 Japanese square-cased versions of the same idea, known as a Mikkyphone.

Christopher Proudfoot showed a 1909 Barnett Samuel Dulcephone portable, not unlike the HMV Pigmy Grand and complete with a carrying case.

The evening ended with a light-hearted recital with anecdotes, from our Treasurer Barry Williamson. Most of his records were played on the 511, and included Brother, Can you Spare a Dime?, BBC dance music (Henry Hall), Charles Coborn, Gus Elen and Jelly Roll Morton. The inclusion of two operatic Blue Amberols (Caro Nome, Kurz and the Anvil Chorus) helped to ensure there was something for everyone in a well-balanced programme. The humorous anecdotes included remarks about travel in general, British Rail, opera-going and pre-war radio programmes.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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HELD AT THE ECCENTRIC CLUB ON OCTOBER 25th 1980.

The Meeting opened with the reading of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting. Under Matters Arising, Barry Williamson stated that he understood the Registry of Business had, or was about to be, abolished, and in answer to a question about the timing of branch meetings, the Chairman pointed out that this was up to the Branch concerned.

The Chairman reported a good year, and in his other capacity as Editor, commented on the economies made by sending ready-typed artwork to the printer. Some good articles were being sent in and there was plenty of material in hand, although new articles are always welcome.

The Treasurer also reported a successful year, but announced the need to raise the subscription next year, to allow for postal increases, and he also pointed out that the magazine would have to be professionally typeset again should the present Editor at any time be unable to continue. The vigorous activities of the Vice-Chairman in the publications field had brought in large sales figures, and the actual balance of £1,533 was quite adequate to cover the rest of the subscription year to February,

including the printing of three issues of the magazine.

Gordon Bromly and Barry Raynaud seconded acceptance of the Treasurer's and the Auditor's repts, which was carried unanimously. The Chairman proposed a special vote of thanks to the Treasurer for all the work he has done on the Society's behalf since his appointment.

Under Election of Officers, the Chairman outlined some impending changes at the next A.G.M., deriving from Barry Williamson's intention to retire as Treasurer at that time. It was proposed that John McKeown would take over as Treasurer, relinquishing the post of Secretary, which would pass to Dave Roberts. Alternative nominations were invited. For the present year, the existing Officers and Committee were re-elected (proposed by Reg Fisher, seconded by Ted Cunningham) and Peter Martland was elected to the Committee (proposed by Dave Roberts, seconded by Christopher Proudfoot). Mrs. E. Legge was appointed Auditor, proposed by Frank Andrews, seconded by Arthur Close.

As proposed last year, the following amendment was made to the Constitution, as an addition to Clause 4: 'The Committee shall have power to hold an Extraordinary General Meeting at any time during the year to carry out business which would otherwise be delayed until the next Annual General Meeting. Due notice of any General Meeting shall be given to Members at least twenty-one days in advance.' This proposal was carried, with an amendment that 'The quorum of any General Meeting shall be twelve members' (proposed by Gordon Bromly, seconded by Barry Raynaud).

Under Any Other Business, the Treasurer asked permission to dispose of some of the Society papers he was holding, some of them going back six or seven years, and it was agreed that he should use his discretion as to which should be kept, as should the Archivist, to whom they should be sent. After a discussion on the Subscription rate for next year, £5 for U.K. members was proposed by Barry Raynaud, seconded by Ted Cunningham and carried. The overseas rates were left for the Treasurer to calculate when the new overseas postal rates were known, and taking into account current exchange rates.

The President, George Frow, proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the four officers for their continuing efforts in ensuring the well-being of the Society, and this was appropriately followed by the re-election of George Frow as President, his term of five years having expired, and the meeting concluded with an expression of thanks to the President for his constant efforts on the Society's behalf, voiced by Barry Williamson.

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London, SE12.  
November 1st 1980

Dear Christopher,

Responding to your appeal for a new title for your Editorial column, may I suggest an appropriate alternative to 'Chairman's Chat' would be 'Torque from the Governor'. Yours sincerely, Ted Cunningham.

## **Book Review**

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ERIC COATES

A BIOGRAPHY AND DISCOGRAPHY BY STUART UPTON

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Every few years - and it may be more often - The Vintage Light Music Society publishes a booklet on a particular musician of the past, and includes some biographical information as well as a discography. Last time it was Sir Dan Godfrey, and now it is the turn of Eric Coates.

Coates (1886-1957) was fortunate in having a long active career as player and composer, especially as the writer of pleasant songs dating from the days when Weatherley and Adams and Wilfred Sanderson were in full flower. Later came suites, ballets, waltzes and marches, some of these reflecting the optimistic but superficial chrome and mink years before the last war. For several years after it, they stayed in the shadows of fashion, but more recently Coates is again on a full tide of popularity and as he lived until 1957 we are lucky to have a number of his principal compositions conducted by him fairly easily found on 78s, and a few still obtainable on 1.p., in addition to the bulk of his compositions recorded under various conductors, from Sir Adrian Boult downwards.

If his later pieces had a whiff of commercialism, particularly those television marches, perhaps inspiration was sometimes hard to find. 'London Bridge', which would not have survived if the composer were not Eric Coates, was used to introduce Pathé Gazette in the mid-thirties, and the popular 'Dam Busters March' is the re-working of a march of 12 years earlier.

It is rewarding and fun to investigate Eric Coates' music and this booklet lists everything known to have been recorded from cylinder to present day, and at a price that doesn't buy much from the shops these days. It includes all the main record labels, the music publishers' labels like Chappells and Boosey and Hawkes (so often overlooked in discographies), ENSA and B.B.C. recordings. This is an inexpensive appraisal of a truly British composer whose music is happily becoming more widely accepted year by year, and is much recommended.

George Frow.

ERIC COATES.....published by The Vintage Light Music Society,  
[REDACTED] West Whickham, Kent, England.

22pp., Price 75p. (U.K.); 85p. (overseas), or £1 (overseas airmail)

SOUTH-EAST MEETING SUNDAY MARCH 15th 1981.

Although the South-Eastern branch has not met regularly for some years now, Member Ron Armstrong is holding a meeting at his house on March 15th from 11 a.m. All members will be welcome, and are invited to contribute by bringing along a machine. There will be a variety of phonographs and gramophones demonstrated, and, in particular, the Duo-Trac will be in action. Nor would it surprise us to find Ron's Limonaire fair organ getting its say in the proceedings. Refreshments will be provided, and this promises to be a good day out for all. The address is: Lawn Cottage, Nash Street, Nurstead, Gravesend, Kent. Nash Street is a country lane leading off the A227 Gravesend - Tonbridge road, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the junction with the A2. The nearest station is Meopham (about 1 mile south), to which there is an hourly train service from Victoria.

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